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WHAT YOU'LL RECIEVE FROM THIS COURSE

Becoming a master copywriter is a process that takes years of learning and hard work. But becoming a serious copywriter doesn't require being a master. It requires the right mindset, and a set of tactics that will allow you to position yourself, target a market, emphasize with the needs of business owners, and start getting clients and references without becoming desperate, undervaluing your work, and burning yourself out.

It doesn't aim to be the end-all and be-all.

But hopefully, this book will be a huge part of your copywriting education.

To be sure, the definition of success varies depending on the person, but no matter who you are, you probably know what failure feels like:

- Feeling desperate... because you don't have any clients.
- Feeling nervous... because you don't know how to price your work.
- Feeling ashamed... because you don't have experience or credibility.
- Feeling embarrassed... because you aren't sure that you'd know what to do once you got hired!

Read on – and use the fresh approaches inside this book to quickly make a good income without feeling burned out or scraping by for months “paying your dues”. It's easier than it sounds, as long as you're willing to follow directions and put your limiting beliefs aside...



Maybe you don't think that you deserve to make a bunch of money off the bat. But here's a little secret – you don't need to be Gary Halbert or Dan Kennedy to make a mark as a copywriter. There's a huge demand for people who even *loosely* understand the principles

we're about to apply, and once you connect with that demand, you'll be able to set your own terms.

Your experience isn't that important, either. In fact, it's probably better if you're a new copywriter. But success as a sales writer isn't as effortless as hanging your shingle and waiting for people to stampede towards you. Instead, you need to market yourself – which makes perfect sense. Being a copywriter is all about getting a market, understanding a market, writing the words that inspire confidence in a desired end result.

Fortunately, you can show off your chops – and increase your asking price exponentially - by delivering results for your first client... yourself.

HOW TO EFFORTLESSLY MANIPULATE OTHERS

Let's talk for a few minutes, you and I, about people.

You probably know a lot of people – your co-workers, your family, your high school English teacher.

But I'm talking about "people" in a broader context. I'm talking about the human race, and the emotions that have driven us to eat, love, kill, and spend money for thousands of years.

While individuals are complex and nuanced, people on the macro level are incredibly simple. And that's going to work to your advantage.

Just understanding these emotional hot buttons and applying them consistently will be an amazing first step on your way towards being a copywriting professional. You don't even have to *be subtle about it*. Just follow along.



As you write your copy, research your markets, and introduce yourself to future clients and customers, think about these buttons, and what you can do to push them.

In time, it'll bleed into your civilian life, and you'll think about the art of manipulation whenever you watch political arguments, argue with your friends, or look at an advertisement. When you're no longer shocked at how often they're applied, consider yourself a copywriter.

PEOPLE ARE AFRAID

Every human life has its share of tragedy – unanswered loves, missed opportunities, loved ones who are gone forever. We see others suffer all the time,

and that's why most people are driven by their fear of suffering. People will do anything to avoid poverty, loneliness, sickness and death.

But here's a paradox – people will often refuse to do the things that could help them avoid those things. We don't just fear consequences – we fear struggle of any kind. No matter what kind of rewards are at stake, the average person wants them without pain and without risk, and will look endlessly for a way to avoid either.

PEOPLE DON'T LIKE RESPONSIBILITY

Few people purposely sabotage their own lives. Most of us are doing the best we can despite not always having the best of circumstances. It hurts to be told that after everything we're doing to keep our heads above water, there's something else we've neglected to do.

It's easy to trust a person who tells us things aren't our fault. That's something that we *feel*, deep down. Someone who repeats it back to us instantly builds a rapport, which is why the phrase *it's not your fault* pops up in so much sales copy.

PEOPLE FEEL GUILTY ABOUT THEIR MISTAKES

Despite what's been said so far, your average person isn't an oblivious ball of entitlement and misdirected anger... well, not *always*, anyway. We remember the things we did wrong, and we'd do anything to turn back time, undo the damage of our previous choices, and make things right again.

And if there were ONE BIG CHANGE (say, a purchase) we could make to set us back on the right path, we'd take it.

Guilt, in small doses, is a powerful intersection between fear and hope. Use it.

PEOPLE ARE TIRED OF BEING SCREWED OVER

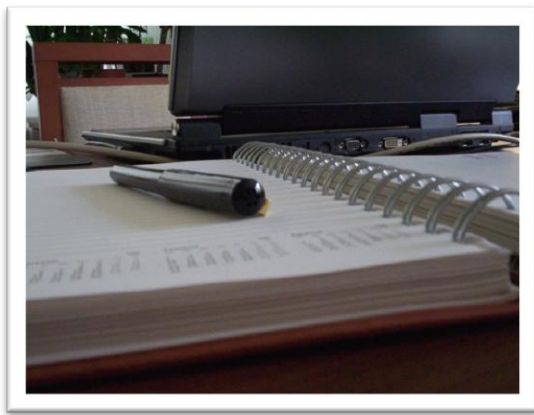
All of us are faced with a lot of enemies in our lives, whether they're economic, social, or natural. When it doesn't look like there's something around to blame,

we'll make one up! Every time we make a purchase, we're looking for a friend in our personal struggles.

Someone who hates the same things we hate is easy to see as a friend. Have you noticed how everyone who asks for your email address nowadays **hates** spam?

PEOPLE WANT IN

Every human walking the face of this planet is ordinary in *most* aspects of life. If we're really lucky, there are a couple of things (access to a special group, or specialized knowledge) that separates us from the rest of the world. Ask a writer, doctor, or a carpenter about their craft and their eyes will well up with pride as they discuss what we do.



Everybody wants to feel like they're part of an exclusive club. And if we can buy in for the privilege, they'll do so happily.

Conversely, if you threaten to *leave us out*, whether you use time or a number as your limiting factor, even the most levelheaded person will go into a panic.

PEOPLE WANT APPROVAL

Love, respect, appreciation – no matter what you want to call it, we've all done nice things for others and made sacrifices, and we'd really like it if someone appreciated them.

We get suspicious when someone piles on the approval, but a compliment always makes us happy – and it always makes us want to live up to that compliment.

PEOPLE WANT TO BE PROTECTED

Most of us are exhausting ourselves trying to chase our needs and desires. And there's always a facet of life we don't know anything about.

Everyone could use a little help.

Once someone promises to lead us, save us, teach us, or smooth our path, we'll bend over backwards to satisfy them in any way possible – especially if they've proven they're up to the task.

Can I emphasize that for a minute? **No matter how well your business is doing, the instinct to be protected by someone stronger than them is more powerful than the instinct to take pity on someone weaker than them.** That's why positioning yourself as a skilled copywriter is so important.

AN EIGHT POINT PLAN FOR LANDING YOUR FIRST CLIENTS

Isn't it amazing how easy it is to go above the call of duty for a friend or a client, while completely neglecting our own needs? If you want a strong start in the freelance copywriting business, you'll need to be swifter and more assertive than you might be under normal circumstances. Resolve to do your best work promoting a product you're intimately familiar with – yourself.

POINT ONE: SELF EVALUTATION

Think of yourself as a product: who is your ideal customer and what unique benefits can you provide for them?

What marketing skills do you bring to the table?

- Are you a great article writer?
- Can you produce stunning videos?
- Are you photogenic or a good speaker?
- Do you have a blog?
- Do you already have deep knowledge of a certain niche?

All of these things can deeply contribute your ability to find and impress clients, so take note of them.

POINT TWO: TARGET MARKET

What kind of clients are you trying to reach? It's not enough to say "anyone with money" in the Web 2.0 world. People are more interested in customized solutions than ever before.

Put yourself in the shoes of a potential client – if a hotel owner has to choose between a generic writer offering copy for a print brochure for \$500, and someone who has branded themselves as a hotel copywriter who has contacts in the industry and experience creating material for the industry, they'll pay twice as much for the privilege of working for the serious, dedicated copywriter in that industry.

POINT THREE: LEVERAGE YOUR SKILLS

There isn't a single marketing plan that you can follow like a robot to connect a unique client with your unique skills. So look at your own skills and write down a plan that brings your unique skills and situation to play as often as possible.

If you're handsome and live in an exotic location, set up a camera. Take pictures and videos to build to your brand. If you're a fast writer, or have a strong wit, hop on a forum and give help and advice. If you're a bit more deliberate, pour your energy into blog posts. If you've got a telephone and free time, start sending calls and hand letters to local businesses in your target market.

No matter who you are and where you are, there's something unique that **you** bring to the table.

It's smart to work to your strengths and focus on marketing instead of forcing yourself to learn "new skills."

POINT FOUR: CREATE A CONVERTING WEBSITE

Just any website isn't acceptable. Your site doesn't need to be flashy, but it does need to be professional and effective. Here's how:

First, remember that all the "rules" of good copy apply to your website too. It's amazing how many copywriters stress providing benefits over listing features when talking to clients, but forget to do that when representing themselves. Talk directly to your client about problems they're facing – emails that get unopened, ugly and ineffective website content, low conversion rates on sales letters, and how you can fix it.



Second, give away your expertise for free to generate leads. Write a new article discussing an aspect of copywriting every day (unless you're guest posting for someone else or doing paid work). Write a special report on how to optimize copy for the web or choose a copywriter, and ask potential clients to opt-in in exchange for it.

Third, create credibility. Even if you don't have experience, there are lots of small things you can do to create the appearance of professionalism. A picture of yourself emphasizes that you're a "real person." Testimonials from bosses, coworkers, and clients help too. You might have to use some creative wording if the experience wasn't directly related to copywriting.

POINT FIVE: ADD A PORTFOLIO

Your portfolio doesn't need 5 items in 5 different genres, each showing off your mastery of a different style. Keep things basic and write one or two great samples about a product in a niche you have some knowledge and understanding of.

Even if you haven't done any paid work before, you can still deliver your expertise by hiring yourself and demonstrating results. There are a few good approaches for this:

First, create a “before and after” sales letter for an existing product. You can either contact a product owner and offer to do this for free, or you can do it yourself by using the letter for a PLR product. Present both of the letters side by side and discuss your changes in text or via video.

Second, you can go a step further and create your own information product and promote it via PPC or the Warrior Forum. Researching, writing, and selling a product can be a lengthy process – but it’s what business owners deal with every day. Showing that you can deliver results for **yourself** is the quickest way to prove that you can do it for others.

Third, you can simply write a letter for a conceptual product in your niche. This is the fastest way to get something up and in front of clients so you can focus on the next steps of your marketing plan.

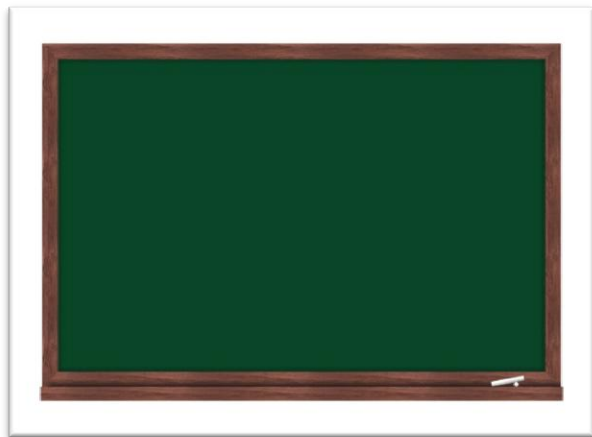
POINT SIX: NETWORK LIKE CRAZY

If you’re trying to avoid the stiff competition of online marketplaces, the best thing to do is to work locally. Find stores, restaurants, construction companies, plumbers, HVAC specialists, chiropractors in larger cities like New York, Miami, or Chicago.

Why? Because competition in these cities is stiff, and in order to survive, they usually have to hire professionals to create engaging content and headlines.

Study some of these sites and compare them to each other, and to the basic principles of copywriting.

Now spend time looking at similar sites for businesses located in suburbs and smaller towns. Chances are that once you leave the top one or two sites, the quality takes a nose dive. Usually the people behind these sites are sole proprietors who are doing all the work themselves and really hate writing!



If you have a budget and a little patience, send physical letters introducing yourself and your service. You don't need to charge a lot. Once you've improved the profitability of a couple of websites, word will spread like wildfire.

Look around your local area for business lunches, clubs, chambers of commerce, and networking groups.

These sorts of groups give you a chance to get your face in front of a less jaded audience.

While you might have to spend a little time explaining who you are and why it's valuable, it's much easier to position yourself as an expert. Remember that you're looking for qualified clients. That means active businesspeople that can afford to hire you. Not tire kickers who are "working on something".

Either volunteer to give a short presentation on copywriting for small businesses, or just attend the event, collect business cards, and be ready to explain what you do in casual conversations.

Think up a fifteen second pitch that explains who you are, what you do, and why it's beneficial. Chances are, the person you're talking with will have their own advertising woes (who doesn't need more money), so listen diligently and proceed from there. Remember that you don't need to walk away from the conversation with a check in your hand – give them your website and tell them you'll appraise their website for free if they contact you.

If you're focusing on online marketing, the same general principle applies. Find mastermind groups, Skype rooms, and message boards where product creators are networking and start making contacts.

You can also approach graphic designers, web developers, and other copywriters.

Let them know who you are, how much you like their work (be specific), and that you would be open to working together or bartering in the future. Chances are they've already got plenty of contacts they can refer to you – and as you get more interest as a copywriter, it's always good to have sources on hand that can deliver graphics and other sales elements.

This is an especially strong strategy when working with graphic designers in the Philippines and Singapore, where there are plenty of world-class designers who could still use the help of a strong English copywriter to gain more credibility.

POINT SEVEN: BE VISIBLE

The more people see, hear, and read your name, the more value is attached to it. That means you can command more money and better clients. There are so many different ways to market yourself that it would be difficult to mention them all in this space.

But as a copywriter, the bulk of your work is for your clients who have products or services to sell. That's why it's helpful to maintain a blog that works as a calling card and showcases your writing talents to potential clients.

The most difficult thing with maintaining a blog is usually knowing what to write about. As with your sales page and other content, you will start with an in-depth keyword search. Use keywords relating to your niche market that you think the target audience is going to search for.

Don't be afraid to attack a really tight niche in order to stand out. The following are just some of the things you can blog about:

- Tell personal stories about your product.
- Create a "Frequently Asked Questions" section.
- Suggest and refer to other experts in the field.
- Review work from other people, or PLR products.
- Interview customers, bloggers or partners in your niche market.
- Write about your opinions on current trends related to the niche market.

- Provide tips on how to solve issues your target audience will have.
- Help solve potential issues with the product you're selling.

Now that you know how to create your blog and what topics to write about, it is time to start writing posts. You should aim for writing on the blog at least twice a week, but more often in the beginning to get the blog running is a good idea. You want to reach your target audience on a more personal level, showing how passionate you are about the subject.

You should also portray your expertise on the subject and let you become a well-known expert in the field. If you find it difficult writing posts, create a schedule or to-do list where you are writing a blog every few days or once a week on the same day. If you know you write a blog post every Sunday night, you will remember to do so each week.

In time, researching and writing each blog post will be a simple process that takes less than an hour a week to do. Small price to pay for the amount of free traffic you will get in the long run by doing this. There's nothing wrong with hustling for clients and quick money, but you don't want to stay there forever!

It's also important not to become insular.

Post insightful comments on small business blogs – tools like Google Alert will give you instant updates when a popular blog has a new update, so you can write an insightful post early on, leave a link to your website, and enjoy the extra visibility.

You can look for opportunities to write guest blog posts, too. Google phrases like “[your niche] + write for us” for places that are looking.

Commenting on discussion forums is a good strategy, too – just make sure your posts have personality and content, and aren't just “white noise” with a signature attached.

POINT EIGHT: ALWAYS FOLLOWUP!

Remember that few customers are going to place an order with you on your first contact with them.

When someone signs onto your mailing list, make sure you have an autoresponder sequence ready to give them further advice that leads towards the sale. When reaching out to offline clients, make sure you call them after your initial contact.

If you haven't met them in person, *create the initial contact* by mailing a letter that offers a free consultation or report. If you can include a small item (like a die or a few coins) in the letter, it increases the chances that the owner will open it out of curiosity and remember you when you call down the line.

This seems like a lot of work – but it's easier than it sounds.

If you're strapped for time and need to pare things down, simply ask yourself:

- Who can hire you for the job you want?
- What do they need more than anything else?
- What can you do to convince them that you can do it?
- Where are these people hanging out?
- What medium can I use to give them your message?



The trick is to put the same energy in selling yourself as you would a client. The process can be slow going for the first week or so, but you'll quickly create exponential results and find yourself facing more potential leads than you imagined.

Of course, this presents its own problems. After all, you're a writer – do you have the skills and know-how needed to negotiate the rates that you deserve? Don't worry – in the next chapter you're going to learn how to completely master this vital element of your business.

HOW TO WRITE WITHOUT GOING BROKE

Control the market, or the market will control you.

And trust me, you don't want that to happen.

It's an absolute certainty that there's someone out there willing to do your job for less money than you. Spend a day on a website like ELance and you'll see hordes of copywriters offering to do lengthy sales letters for a pittance. The only reason to compete with those people is if you like being poor more than they do.

The typical working stiff will spend months – or years – at a job that drastically underpays them in the hopes that experience or results will bump them “up the ladder”, only to feel frustration and disappointment when that bump never comes.

They might feel their employer doesn't really care about them – and they're right. The boss at the typical job *cares* about you as much as you might *care* about two competing brands of generic toilet paper.

It might have been drilled into your head that experience was the best way to demonstrate value to a business. But one look around at all the “experienced” people getting laid off to make room for cheaper talent should tell you that's less true than ever.

You must have the confidence to proactively create value for yourself. Market yourself as a person who is uniquely qualified to help a client or employer. If you're too afraid to do that, you'll always be seen as a common commodity - and you'll be treated accordingly.



Furthermore, if you can't even get the going rate on your own work, how on earth will you be able to sell anyone else's?

Let's talk about ways to increase your perceived value before your first negotiation:

IMAGE IS EVERYTHING

There are plenty of brilliant, high dollar copywriters with ugly websites.

But chances are, they made their mark without using the internet to generate their first leads.

Invest in graphics, business cards and images that scream "high dollar professional". They don't have to be expensive, but they do have to look good – remember that as a new copywriter, you're creating value out of thin air. Good looking collateral will really leave an impression on visitors.

BE A PROBLEM SOLVER

In the same way that you can specialize in a niche, you can specialize in solving a specific problem. Don't be afraid to highlight a problem you think your potential clients might face and present yourself as a person who specializes in solving those problems. Maybe you specialize in a certain industry or writing a certain style of sales copy. Stress it!

ONLY WORK FOR WHAT YOU DESERVE

How much money do you need to keep afloat every month? How long does it take for you to write a good piece of copy? How much time do you have to devote to writing?

Once you've combined those numbers, you've got a good idea of how much your time is worth *at minimum*. You may be surprised at how high a number it is – and you may be even more surprised that you're probably *still* lowballing yourself a bit.

OFFER TIERED PRICING

Ask yourself whether you can offer a little “extra” for a client who is willing to pay above your minimum rate.

Perhaps you’d be willing to do a little extra work, get the job done on a shorter timetable, or give other services like SEO promotion, social media, blog posts and articles, graphic design, or website setup (remember that these tasks can either be outsourced or handed to your contacts).

Creating one or two “premium” packages for your clients indirectly increases the value of your main offer – it’s easier for a client to say “I think your rate is too high” than it is for them to say “I think your *lowest* rate is too high”.

HAVE DOWNSSELLS AT THE READY

Imagine getting a quote for oral surgery from your local dentist. You may be in excruciating pain, but his prices are way out of your league.

“It’s okay,” he says calmly. “I can still work with you. I have a few budget options that will ease the pain...”

Smaller packages for things like email auto-responders and sales letter rewrites are a great way to get your foot in the door – while raising the perceived value of your work. Remember that doing a great job for a paying customer can benefit you in the long run in terms of referrals and repeat business, regardless of their budget.

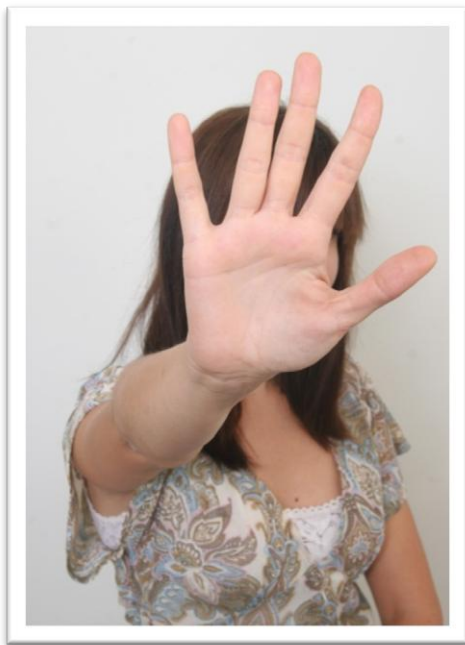
AVOID “POISONOUS” CLIENTS

Taking on a bad client can be a bit like drinking poisoned water in the desert – it feels good for a few seconds, but it can quickly eat you from the inside out. Cast a skeptical eye toward:

- *Clients that talk about how bad all their previous copywriters were.*
Remember, there are other factors in sales besides copywriting, like traffic and a good offer.

- *I'll pay you from the profits!* Don't do this to yourself. If someone doesn't have the resources to compensate you, they probably don't have the resources needed to do the many other things that go into an offer.
- *This is a great opportunity for future business!* Treat future business as imaginary leverage and hold out for paying work.

Saying “no” is one of the HARDEST things you'll have to do, but it's vital to your long term success and sanity. The harder you work to establish your value, the less effort you have to put into making sales, and the more you ward off bad



clients. But once you finally close the sale, you'll have another challenge – delivering on your promises and writing copy that sells.

Luckily for you, if you've taken to heart the tools and ideas presented so far, you'll have a good idea of the principles used to build empathy and credibility with buyers.

But before you put pen to paper on any sales material, it's important to know your market and the needs behind them. You can ask a client these questions at an initial consultation, or really impress them by doing the research yourself, presenting what you already know,

and asking for their insight.

HOW TO KNOW WHAT THE HELL YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT

Every effective copywriter is an effective researcher. This business is about empathy - knowing your product, knowing the people who buy it, and tying the two together. Before you take a look at your own product, spend a little time stripping down the competition in your target niche.

UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE

Who is going to buy your product? There are probably plenty of people from many different walks of life who are going to buy what you're selling, but as you write, you need to keep a very specific target in mind.

Want lukewarm, watery copy that doesn't sell? The easiest way to get there is to try and sell your product to "everybody" and promise vague and generic benefits. Even if you just narrow it down to genders or hobbies, you aren't doing yourself any favors.

After all, "dog owners" are a pretty obvious target market for dog food.

Think about the kinds of customers who won't just buy your product, but will be fanatical about it – buying it over and over and interacting with the brand.

When you're narrowing down a target market, it's important to think about their age, their income level, their likes and dislikes, and what kinds of emotional hot buttons they're likely to respond to.

For example, a presidential campaign depends heavily on contributions from donors. When they send mailers asking for contributions, they'll play heavily on fear (of the opposition winning) and exclusivity (being personally responsible for helping their candidate prevail).

Be more specific about your knowledge of your target market, their problems, and their hot buttons. This will allow you to be more specific with your language and really dig into their buying instinct.

RESEARCH THE COMPETITION

Seek out their website, subscribe to their mailing lists, read their sales letters, and write down their headlines and most compelling benefits. What do they promise to do for the target customer faster, easier, or better? Take special note of phrases or design elements that show up across more than one competitor (do all of their websites prominently display badges from TrustE, a white background, and prominent testimonials?)

Ask you peruse these products, take out an old fashioned pen and paper and write down every question you can about them, and adjust your mindset to that of a **fearful** customer. Ask yourself questions out of fear, and ask yourself what parts of the sales language address that fear.

LOOK AT PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

That doesn't mean trade magazines – it means the magazines sitting on shelves at the drugstore. The best headline writers in the world spend an entire month thinking up ways to get attention to their words – do you think you could learn a thing or two from them?

If you can find amazing, authoritative blogs in your market, you'll find a similar level of quality.

FIND OUT WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

Once you've spent time looking at the product from the company's point of view, spend a little time looking at customer feedback on message boards, websites, and social media. Go to Blekko and type in "[Product Name Here]" Reviews for a mostly spam-free look at what people are saying.

Be careful as you do this, though. Even on sites like Amazon, many top reviews are going to be paid for – solely designed to push the product in question with the thinnest veneer of content spread across it like peanut butter on a public school sandwich.



If a review has copy that sounds suspiciously similar to the sales pitch from the product creator, or they have more than one link to the product in question, or their link is tagged with a keyword, or they're offering a rebate or SPECIAL BONUS with the product if you buy it from them – take their words with caution, or better yet, ignore them altogether. Don't jump all over a

negative review and think you've found "the truth" either.

The more reviews you read, the more refined your B.S. detector will become.

Ultimately, your goal is to find out what makes your competitors unique in the marketplace, and what people are looking for that they haven't delivered.

WHAT SETS YOU APART?

Before you begin writing your sales copy, you need to be fully prepared. One way to do this is to write a detailed and well-thought out unique selling proposition (USP). This proposition is going to show readers why your product is unique from others like it and help you to format and write flawless sales copy that is highly successful.

WHAT IS A USP?

USP stands for "unique selling proposition." Is it a term often used in the copywriting industry due to its effectiveness in conjunction with marketing. USP is what makes the product or service you're selling unique and showcases the benefits of the product for your niche market. By understanding USP and its many advantages in your sales copy, you will be able to write highly successful copy that

gets more sales. The USP will describe what the company does, the types of products it provides, and define business goals.

SUCCESSFUL SALES COPY AND USP

The USP isn't used in the copy itself, but helps you plan the sales copy. Having a unique selling proposition lets you learn how valuable the product or service is — as if trying to sell it to yourself. By first learning how unique it is and how to sell to yourself, you will be able to turn around and use that knowledge to write an effective sales copy. This technique is used by marketers and should be used by copywriters, as well. It will show you how to set yourself apart from the competition with a unique product, encourage selling the product and offer a proposal for that unique product.

HOW TO INCORPORATE A UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

If you're in a local market, spend time looking at professionals from out of town to see how they position themselves. If you're selling an information product, be flexible, look over the information and see if there are fast changes you could make to improve its value.

Ask yourself: how does your product make money, save time, cater to customers, or alleviate a problem in a way that none of your competition does?

Identify your Target Audience – The USP should always begin with your target audience. If you have yet to identify your niche market, now is the time to do so. Be as specific as you can in your USP as it will help you write a great sales copy.

Solve a Problem – You also need to identify the problem that your niche market will have and explain why your product is going to solve that problem. Consider this from the perspective of the buyer when creating a USP.

List the Benefits – Next, you want to list the biggest benefits to your products. Aim for about 3 to 5 of the most prevalent benefits that you feel your customers will find. These should be benefits that make your product or company unique and set you apart from others.

The Promise – As with the body of the sales copy, the promise needs to be identified in the USP as well. This is what you are going to tell your prospective clients about your client or product.

Combine and Shorten – Now that you have a lengthy list of what your unique selling proposition will entail, you should first combine everything into a paragraph. Then, cut it down and shorten it to no more than 1-2 sentences. This USP is going to help you with every aspect of your sales copy.

Domino's Pizza got plenty of traction offering pizza delivered in 60 minutes. Papa John's also found traction in the pizza market by promising "Better Ingredients, Better Pizza".

Now, I don't know whether Domino's really had the fastest and most efficient deliver corps in pizza history in the 80's. And I'm pretty sure that Papa John's sauce comes in a can just like everybody else's. In the global economy, it's very difficult to have an exclusive advantage in your market that stays exclusive for long.

Resist the urge to be "too creative". You're not trying to win an award for artistic merit, you're trying to make sales, and sometimes simple is best.

You should also stay away from "wishy washy" USP's like lower prices or vague promises of better service. But if there's something specific you do to serve the customer, then by all means point it out.

CONVERSION TESTING: BEING GOOD AND GETTING BETTER

After writing your sales pages, you are going to have several versions of the page — each of which will have a different level of effectiveness. Headlines, color choices, PS statements, pictures... all of it is going to have a strong impact on the performance of the page.

The best way to know which is going to perform best is by doing conversion testing. You will continue using the conversion testing method for gauging the performance of your different sales page variations and choosing which is superior. First of all, this helps you gauge exactly how good a piece is performing. Second, honing your projects over time is an excellent way to improve results for clients over time.

WHAT IS CONVERSION TESTING?

Conversion testing for copywriters, also known as A/B testing or split testing, allow you to test different versions of a sales page to see which is going to look better on the web.

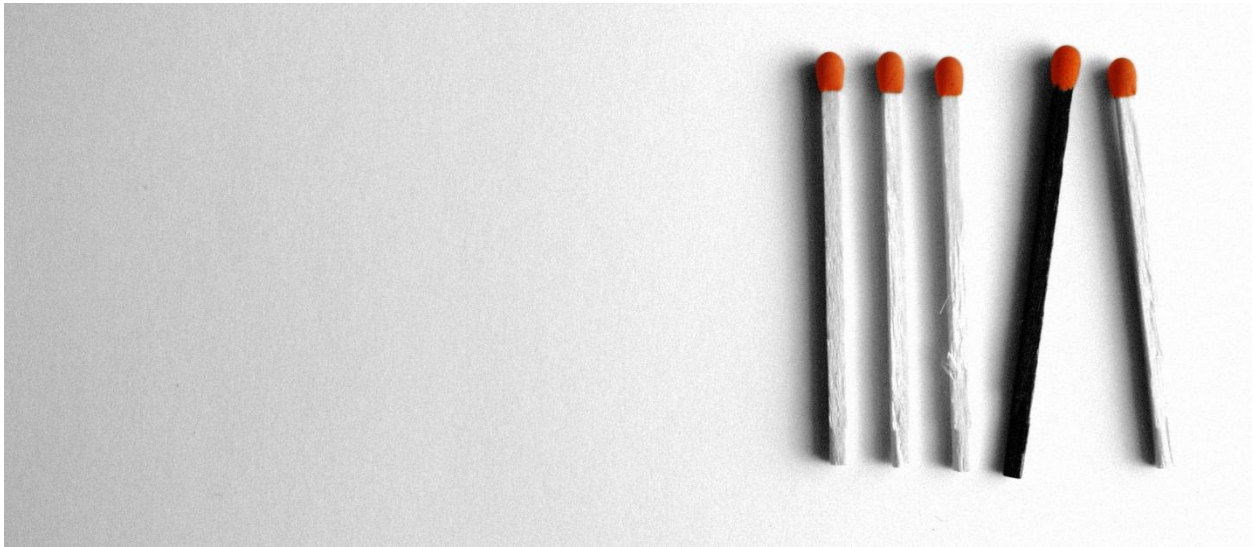
Conversion testing lets you find out which is going to be most beneficial and generate the most traffic. It is also used for improving your sales pages on a regular basis. The software application where you do the testing gives you different measurements for how effective the pages are.

WHAT DOES CONVERSION TESTING LOOK FOR?

There are a number of things the testing process is going to check for. This includes checking the graphics on the sales page to see which one has better conversion rates, the positioning of elements such as the shopping cart and on which page it is easier to access, the overall function of the sales page and then deciding if fewer or more elements is going to be more beneficial. During conversion testing, each individual element of the different variations of sales pages is going to be checked, allowing you to pick and choose which elements are going to work the best.

WHY CONVERSION TESTING IS IMPORTANT

As a copywriter, you should consider yourself an Internet Marketer and, therefore, write your sales pages and other content as if you were the client. Put yourself in their shoes and let the conversion testing decide which version of content is going to perform more effectively.



Not all copywriters utilize testing conversion rates, which is already putting you ahead of the competition. It will help improve interaction with the sales page visitors, get your visitors to remain longer on the site and take the time to read it more thoroughly, encourage newsletter sign-ups and requesting consultations and of course, improve the sale rate compared to how many visitors you get. This is sometimes the only way to be sure you get the interaction, views and sales you need when you are in a target market that has a lot of competition.

HOW TO PERFORM CONVERSION TESTING

There are different software applications and testing platforms that are useful for conversion testing, but the Google Content Experiments (formerly Website Optimizer) is a good place to start.

The optimizer is a free and easy-to-use testing platform that lets you see the benefits or disadvantages of changes to different elements on each sales page. It is user friendly and popular among most copywriters and Internet Marketers.

An added benefit to using Content Experiments is that it can be used with your existing URLs, instead of custom testing URLs like many other applications. You will first identify the pages you plan on testing, such as your different sales page variations. You will then define what element of the pages you want to test.

You might want to test two different headlines, images, submit buttons, shopping carts or call to actions. You will also use the optimizer to add tags to the different variation pages and see which perform better through tracking.

Enter the URLs of the pages you are testing, preview the pages which lets you see how they will look when live on a browser and then rotate the pages with the optimizer platform for different visitors. Lastly, Content Experiments lets you access different statistics, results and reports after testing the pages.

WHAT SHOULD BE TESTED?

Each element of the page is going to be tested individually and you will decide which version is performing better. So what do you check? Just about every element on your sales page can be checked. Some of the important things you should test with the optimizer or other testing platforms are the headings and sub-headings, opening paragraph, shopping cart and all links, call to action, guarantee section, special offers, submit button, images, the location of your elements, colors, design and any other elements existing on the page.

You should work roughly in that order – your headline is going to have the biggest impact on the page's performance, so start with that.

FINISHING THE CONVERSION TESTING

Different sales pages will be finished at different times. You may check one set of pages, much less than the next, for a reliable estimation of the traffic for those pages.

Continue testing the pages and elements until you have at least 70 conversions. Some niche markets typically have a low customer volume in which 20 or more conversions is a good place to start. You should also consider ongoing conversion testing on pages that are to gain high traffic. It can take time getting the results you want and you should continue testing the conversion rates and making adjustments as needed.

Remember, not all tests will be as successful as others, which is why ongoing testing is imperative. You will soon get realistic adjustments to your pages that get you the highest amount of traffic and conversions possible. Track the results of the different tests on a spreadsheet to look back on and know which elements you want to re-test.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF STRONG COPY

Imagine that your neighbor's house is on fire – and they don't know it.



You look around for a phone to call the fire department – but your cellphone battery is dead, and your landline is already burned out. Things are looking bleak, but you've got one tool at your disposal – a megaphone. If you say just the right words, you can get the attention of your neighbor and make the call that saves their life.

So... what do you say?

- Do you tell a joke?
- Do you introduce yourself and tell them your name?
- Do you describe the charred remains of their coffee table?

If your first words aren't "HEY, YOUR HOUSE IS ON FIRE!" then your neighbor isn't going to make it.

HEADLINES

Unless you're some sort of hermit, you're deluged with advertisements from morning coffee to midnight snack. An advertisement that even has a chance of getting you to take immediate action has to stand out and make an immediate

impression. If it's boring or irrelevant, the rest of the ad doesn't matter because nobody will read it.



Your headline isn't just the way you introduce the following content, it is going to draw your readers in and, in turn, lead to more sales. This makes the headline the most important part of your sales letter and other types of content.

You accomplish that goal by igniting curiosity or making a strong promise that relates directly to their needs. What are the building blocks of a good headline?

- Specific benefits. If you can get down into exact numbers of what people will get, it makes it easier for people to imagine.
- Emotional appeal. Think about the “hot buttons” we mentioned earlier. Is there a way your headline can touch on these?
- Urgent. Is there a limited time people can get your offer? Or a reason they should buy today?
- The reader will benefit from reading your ad. If your headline promises a benefit to the reader if they'll just read the message, you have a better chance of drawing interest.

Let's talk about a few of the headline types that get that done.

NOW YOU CAN JOIN...

This headline is based off the concept of social proof. A customer might be skeptical of your product, but a first sentence like this implants the idea that not only does your product work, people are already taking advantage of it.

- Now you can join millions of satisfied Americans who've *removed acne from their lives – forever!*
- Who else wants to *lose weight while eating delicious ham sandwiches?*

“HERE’S YOUR CHANCE TO...”

This lets the customer react to scarcity and exclusivity. From the very first sentence, we’ve stopped trying to sell – instead we’re giving them the privilege of buying our product. They will likely ask themselves “What opportunity am I being offered?”, which will at least get them through the first few sentences.

- Here’s your chance to *protect your smartphone from viruses!*
- Here’s your golden opportunity to *escape the next stock market nightmare!*

“HOW TO...”

This is a very simple headline that draws attention directly to your benefits. It’s very hard to write a bad headline that leads with the promise of a specific benefit and then explains how to get it.

- How To Make \$12,712 Per Week Juggling – No Experience Needed!
- How To Save Hundreds Of Dollars On Car Insurance!
- How To Stop Smoking In Just 12 Days – Or Your Money Back!

“ARE YOU HAVING A PROBLEM?”

This is a chance to build curiosity and empathy with the reader – who will read on for the implicit promise of a solution. Make sure that, as always, your questions are focused on the reader.

- Are Termites Ravaging Your Home?
- Are Your PPC Campaigns Expensive And Complicated?

- Are You Feeling Abandoned By Your Husband?

There are plenty of other concepts that work for headlines. But it's important that, whatever you do, make sure it's specific, promises a benefit or reward for reading the ad.

OPENINGS

Every sentence you write is a chance for the customer to stop reading.

Imagine your potential reader stopping after every sentence you write and asking themselves whether they want to continue.

With that in mind, there are two things your opening paragraph should NOT do – and they both start with a D.

DON'T DAWDLE

When you're first starting to write copy, it's easy to slip into getting sidetracked and taking two or three paragraphs to get to the good stuff - the meat of your offer. Don't let "fluff" sneak into your final copy – be merciless about getting to your point. Deliver the context later if you have to, but give the benefits up front.

DON'T DIVERT FROM YOUR HEADLINE

If your headline is strong and has people reading, why wait to deliver on the answers your reader is looking for? Don't you hate movies that start with an intense action scene and then "flash back" to the hero at home eating a bowl of soup? We can just barely put up with it in a movie, but it's much harder to pull off in advertising.

If you have a powerful testimonial (or a series of powerful testimonials), that can do the job. If your opening is so suspenseful that they'll continue reading, that works too. Here are some ways to do that.

TELL A STRONG, INTERESTING STORY

In short, a good story starts with you in one place, and ends with you in another place.

- If you started with nothing and now you live in a mansion off the coast of Spain, that's a good story.
- If your friend is a hillbilly who works at an auto repair place and made a bunch of money selling widgets on Amazon, that's a good story.
- If you struggled with acne all your life and got called pizza face, and now your skin is flawless, that's a good story.

STATE OR CLARIFY BENEFITS

This seems like a verbal dead end, but it will usually come with a lot of implicit questions. What is it? How does it work? How do I get it? And you can answer those as you write your letter.

- Jane Pollock's Doggie Domination will transform even the most unruly pup into a model citizen.
- Awesome Amazon Riches will make you your first million dollars on Amazon in five seconds or less.
- Our five hour video course will show you the life changing benefits of the paleo diet.

ASK A BARRAGE OF QUESTIONS

If you haven't already led off with a question in your headline, this is a good opportunity to start asking those questions directly. It's generally a good idea to ask those questions in sets of threes if you're in doubt – that's what all the politicians do.

- Is your dog becoming a public health menace? Does he chew shoes and pee on the carpet? Are you afraid to leave him with small members of your family? If you're ready to turn your bad doggie into a well-trained pet...

- Are you still struggling to make your first dollar online? Losing sleep reading eBooks and watching videos? If you're looking for a system that simply works...
- Are you losing hope when it comes to making your mark in the music industry? Are you swamped by competition in your town and online? Are you looking for the beat-making software that will turn you from another face in the crowd to a budding super-producer?

MAKE AN INSANE STATEMENT.

Say something wild that sends the reader into extreme curiosity or disagreement. They're going to want to read just to hear what you're on about and where you're coming from. Just make sure this statement is only insane on the surface.

- 80% of people aren't going to read past my next paragraph. And I'm glad.
- If you're browsing the web looking for information on weight loss, your chances of actually losing weight are astronomically low.
- You can turn your fascination with cartoon animals into internet gold!

BULLETS

Are you worried that people aren't really reading every word of your copy? Good. They probably aren't.

Even the most diligent reader skims a little bit, and the instinct is even stronger when they're looking at an advertisement, no matter how beneficial. That's not always a bad thing. Sometimes people will be so intrigued by your opening that they'll be in a rush to learn more about it and place an order.

In situations like these, bullets can be your best friend. They're short and to the point. That means that even if someone is skimming, you can *use* their reading speed against them to drive your point home.

Here's what makes people pause and actually read bullets instead of passing them by:

- Challenging conventional wisdom. Can you think of a way that your product is a little bit different from the advice they've heard everywhere before? It's a way of raising the value of your product, because it suggests you know something the masses don't.
- Give specific stats. It shows that you've done your homework and makes imagining benefits easier.
- Go right to the benefits. Remember that you don't have to tell HOW something is done – just pique curiosity and make them want to see what's on the inside.

SUB-HEADLINES

Makes sure you sprinkle in sub-headers throughout your copy, especially if it's a long piece. You want to keep the attention of people who prefer to skim, and you want to continually give closer readers new reasons to stay interested in elements of your product.

As always, focus on problems and solutions. It can turn mundane sub-headers into attention sucking monsters!

- Instead of "Testimonials," why not: "See What Other Satisfied Customers Are Saying About Miracle Grass!"
- Instead of "Product Features," say: "Here's What You'll Get Inside Pinterest Mom Profits!"

TESTIMONIALS

Testimonials are a vote of confidence from someone who has seen your product, used it, and gotten the promised results. Obviously, testimonials can go a long way towards establishing your credibility. But some testimonials are better than others.

It doesn't matter if your testimonials are real – if they LOOK FAKE, you'll turn off customers. That's why you want your testimonials to have concrete, believable

details. If you can give a full name, a picture, or a website, you'll go a long way towards establishing credibility.

Obviously, the threshold for a credible testimonial changes depending on the niche. If you aren't sure that customers will give this information... just ask people to share their success stories! You can also might be surprised at how good your results are.

When you ask for feedback, it's very important that you ask the right questions in order to get sales-ready responses.

Even if you get negative feedback, just write it off as constructive criticism and use it to your benefit.



buying it?

- Have you used similar products before? How was this one different?
- How have things improved since starting to use the product?
- How long have you been using our product?
- How do you use the product?
- What's the most helpful part of the product?
- What would you say to someone who is interested in

DEVELOPING YOUR VOICE

In order to build trust and increase sales, you must speak to the potential customer as if he is your friend. And you can't be boring. Maybe you can be boring in your real life, but on the page, your words needs to spring to life. Most people do not enjoy reading technical robotic content that isn't personal, so it is important to write your copy with energy and emotion. This draws the reader in and shows that you are a real person with feelings, just like him.

At first, some copywriters have a hard time with this because they are used to writing straight to the point content—giving just the facts—but, once you get the

hang of writing your copy with energy, feeling and emotion, you will quickly see that it can bring in many more sales and actually excites the reader.

Not only that, I promise that your “regular material” will become a lot more dazzling. You can go on and on all day long about the wonderful benefits of the products and services you are writing about, but if the customer does not connect with you, you are more than likely lose their interest, including the sale.

“JUST THE FACTS?”

At this point, you may be wondering what the best way is to write copy that is engaging and personal, yet still sounds professional. It’s simple...you write as if you are talking to a friend. While you are drafting your copy, imagine you are explaining the company or product to them and you know that they will not appreciate all of the technical jargon. Write as if you are having a conversation over coffee and really want him to understand why you think that this product or service is so great—from your own personal perspective.

Take the opposite route of stating just the facts, for example, that most copywriters utilize when drafting their content. Envision sitting in the coffee shop explaining to the same friend that he should check out XYZ Company because they have made \$1 billion dollars in sales this quarter, employ thousands of workers, have stores located throughout the world and have great products.

He will more than likely be checking the messages on his phone before you even finish your pitch. If, on the other, you sit and talk with him about how your daughter was in a massive problem, and how it kept her up at night, and how the XYZ Company swooped in and saved the day PLUS she’s been saving up to buy more of their stuff...

I am willing to bet that by the end of the conversation, you will have your friend “hooked” on what you are trying to sell and eagerly asking for more details.

Can you spot the difference now of how writing your copy with emotion and feeling can dramatically increase sales? In this day and age of increased internet

and email use, customers are bombarded with sales copy all day long in every message that they open and every website that they visit.

We have all almost become immune to ads and sales pages. This is why it is so vital to stand out in the crowd and be the one that makes the reader stop dead in their tracks to hear what you have to say.

CORE EMOTIONS

As I said earlier, there are a few *core emotions* on which all other feelings are founded. I discussed a handful of the most powerful ones, but I want to remind you to incorporate one or more of these into your copy to quickly gain your reader's attention:

- Acceptance
- Anger
- Anticipation
- Disgust
- Guilt
- Fear
- Joy
- Sadness
- Surprise

LOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Now that you have grabbed your customer's curiosity, it is time to make the sale. The following are a few *logical reasons* that customers use to rationalize before making a purchase. When writing a great sales copy, your goal is to *beat him to it* and answer any questions he may have. You do this by simply stating all of the wonderful benefits of the product, company or service that you are writing about. The following are just a few examples:

- Decreases Aggravations
- Improves Productivity

- Improves Health
- Increases Accessibility
- Increases Income
- Increases Security
- Increases Safety
- Reduces Expenditures

A great way of understanding these copywriting principles is to just keep in mind that the customer has a problem (which you address by including some core emotions in your copy) and then offer a solution (which you propose by speaking of the logical and beneficial reasons behind purchasing the product).

The best copywriters in the industry have mastered this concept and know how to make the sale quickly. Once you have learned the simple process of evoking emotion in your writing, as well as presenting it with logic and fact, you will become the highly sought-after copywriter that you have always dreamed of becoming.

WHAT MOVIES CAN TEACH YOU ABOUT COPYWRITING

If you've ever read a great book or movie, you're aware of the popular Hollywood formula for character development. Remember Star Wars?

Luke Skywalker is an eager young kid from a desert planet who dreams of being an adventurer and saving the galaxy. He feels cooped in by his environment and tries to prove himself at every turn. He's drag racing, he's fighting the sand people, mixing it up at the cantina, and arguing with Han Solo.

When his family is killed by the Empire, he's whisked away by a space wizard who leads him right into the heart of battle, and as soon as he makes his narrow escape from the Death Star – he's off to join the Rebellion!

Everything he does is an attempt to measure his skills against the world around him.

And when the Rebels make that last run at the Death Star, he's ready to do it again. But as the moment of truth grows closer, the voice of his mentor appears in his head and tells him no, not this time.

This time the stakes are too high, and there's nobody here to bail you out.

Doing what you've been doing is going to lead you to failure. Take a new course of action instead.

Trust in the force.

He takes a minute to think about it, he closes his eyes and makes his decision. And there's a moment of triumph when that change pays off and has a drastic impact on his life and the lives of the people around him.

You've probably seen that formula in *hundreds* of movies. We like the main character, but he's spent the whole movie making one mistake. But at the most important point, he sees the error of his ways, makes a big change, and saves the day.

When we make a sale, we're telling a story – and our customer is the main character. She's a good person with a lot of positives, but she has a problem in this one area. And the only way she will solve this problem... is by giving us money. We have the length of the sales letter to convince them that we're their Obi-Wan, the one powerful, magical person in a scary situation that they can trust no matter what.

But we can't do that unless we get them reading. That's why a strong headline and opening are so important. But what specifically can we do to deepen our connection with the reader?

YOUR BUYER – THE MAIN CHARACTER

Once we have the reader's attention and explain the offer, we want to tell a story that places them in a hypnotic state. While answering the questions that have grabbed their attention, we will tell a basic story: they're the main character, struggling against a set of powerful forces that are keeping them from success. They like this character and want them to succeed.

We're the "mentor" character in the story. We're powerful, intelligent, and trustworthy, and we have the ability to solve their problem. Here are the techniques we'll use to do that:

EXPLAIN THEIR PAIN

There's nothing wrong with being a little negative in your sales copy. People spread negative gossip and watch movies where terrible things happen all the time. Think of all the movies you've seen where the hero is down on his luck. Maybe he's struggling with an empty bank account.

- His parents tell him to get a real job.
- His toilet leaks every time he tries to flush and it makes his shoes smell bad.
- He spends hours at a dead-end job he hates while dreaming of something better.

- His “friends” tease him about his poverty when he declines social events he used to enjoy...
- And worst of all, his fiancé is making eyes at other, more successful men.

Movies show us all the details of how bad things are in order to make us feel sorry for the hero. In a sales letter, precise details show the readers we know what they’re going through.

INTRODUCE THE BAD GUY

What’s a good story without a bad guy? We don’t need to invent a dark wizard who talks to snakes here – so define your enemy based on your market. It’s fine to rail against a mysterious enemy like “this tough political climate” or “The Gurus”, but if you’re going after a real defined enemy, you’re eliminating them as customers. Be very careful, and remember that “the enemy” isn’t always a physical person. Sometimes it’s bad weather, stress, or rising interest rates.

- The gurus don’t want me to expose these secrets because they’re the REAL stuff they use to make a living, but now the time has come!
- Democrats/Republicans in Washington are bankrupting the country with reckless spending/wars, but you can sidestep the political fallout when you invest in gold/green energy!
- There are so many naysayers that you can get discouraged from making a living selling briefcases online, but this system can quiet those voices for good.

IT’S NOT THEIR FAULT

If someone is considering paying for a product, odds are they’ve already tried other solutions that haven’t worked. This is especially true in niches like weight loss.

If doubt has started to creep in, it might be a roadblock to their purchase.

After all, why buy another product if the problem is their weakness and laziness? So, divert blame from the buyer. The other times, they were being taken advantage of by some nebulous third party. This time, things will be different.

You don't need to be subliminal here. Just say the phrase "it isn't your fault," or explain why things go poorly for most people.

- It isn't your fault. The average dog training plan isn't suited to modern families.
- If you had problems attracting men in the past, it's not your fault. Men teach boys from a young age how to relate to women, but the shoe is rarely on the other foot...

YOUR SOLUTION: TIME FOR A CHANGE

Once you've established what the problem is, it's time to start talking about the answers. Now you can talk about who you are, and more importantly, how you can help.

Thanks to you, there's real hope for the main character to change their situation.

Do you have compelling evidence or good reviews and testimonials? This section is a good place to share.

Dig deep and give the benefits while explaining what it will be like once they've solved the problem with your help.

THE RIGHT AND WRONG WITH YOU

Discuss yourself, your product, and what makes it so credible. As always, write from the standpoint of what you've done in the past for customers. Provide interesting statistics and testimonials if you can.

Feel free to downplay your product along the way. It seems backwards. You're trying to sell your product after all, so why would you point out flaws or problems with the program? There are three strong reasons. First, we're fighting off the objection that our great offer is too good to be true.

This lets them think that they are buying something with a cool, level head – but we’re just weaving a dream within a dream.

The second reason is that we’re merely stating the benefit of our program in a different way and deflecting a weakness at the same time. If our product is a seven page report, we’re going to say something like:

- This product isn’t a long novel that takes a long time to absorb. There’s no fluff – just the important stuff that gets you results.
- I’ll admit, this product isn’t very lengthy. But the value you’ll gain...

If it’s a 10 hour set of videos and a giant eBook:

- The information in this guide isn’t made to be digested overnight.
- This isn’t an easy, push button system, but once you’ve followed the steps...

The third reason is that we’re establishing ourselves as an authority in the mind of the reader. They can trust us to tell the truth about everything, the competition, the hurdles and benefits of losing weight/training a dog/selling widgets online/whatever, and even our own product! We’re not going to spend a long time downplaying, and we’re going to drop right back into explaining why this “weakness” is actually a positive.

ALWAYS BE VISUAL

Make sure that the customer has an opportunity to imagine how great things will be for them once they’ve bought your product. Two or three times during your sales letter, write things that suppose they’ve already bought in.

- Once you’ve used my Instant Acne Solution, pimples will fizzle away within 4 minutes of your first application!
- At the end of this seminar, you’ll be in an elite club that knows the tremendous power of YouTube’s underground competitors.
- Imagine the pride you’ll feel when you can take your dog to visit friends and family, and even public places like parks.

OVERCOMING NATURAL OBJECTIONS

In movies, the main characters always have some deep emotional reasons why they aren't doing what they're supposed to do. And there's someone around that gives them the inspiration to get off the blocks and get things done. Remember all the concerns a fearful buyer might have about buying? It's time to pull it out. Whatever their weakness is, we're here to support them.

- If it's technical, explain why anyone can follow this plan.
- If it's shyness and lack of charisma, explain why you don't need a lot of courage.
- If it's lack of cash, explain why this is an amazing value.
- Could they be jaded about this field? Explain why the stuff you're selling won't and can't be found anywhere else.

You've talked about pain. So let them how you can eliminate that pain that you so clearly described.

START THE JOURNEY

Now it's time to introduce the product formally. Again, think about movies where a main character has to change their ways. They get to step into the world of the love interest, space wizard, small town Sheriff with a heart of gold. They get to feel what it's like. Otherwise, why would they WANT to change?



So take them away from the stress that you pushed on them in your opening. Explain the features and benefits they'll get from using your product.

You also want to provoke the imagination. You can outright describe the way they'll feel after using your product, use testimonials and stories, or contrast the benefits they'll get from buying the product with the outsiders who won't get to experience that stuff.

Your appeal in this section is going to depend on the emotional hooks that the market needs to make them comfortable. If you've been doing your research, you'll have no problem getting a sense of what should be done.

YOUR OFFER: RAISE THE STAKES

Nobody in a movie makes an important change as soon as someone tells them to. People are stubborn like that. But over the course of the movie, things get darker for the main character, and their desires gradually slide out of reach.

The evidence starts piling up that their old way of doing business isn't working.

They start to think, "hey, maybe making a change isn't as bad as it sounds..."

You can create that effect when you give your offer. Really, a powerful offer is the most important thing you can have as a beginning copywriter – you'd be surprised at how much better your work becomes when you know that you have an amazing offer to provide.

Overdeliver with an amazing product that obviously provides benefits – something you would purchase yourself if you had the problem. Customers are jaded, so it's important to hit them with so much value that they feel a bit foolish if they don't make the investment.

If the product has multiple components, lay them out individually if you have the space, and describe their features as if they were a product of their own.

Furthermore, point out any bonuses and talk about what they can do. There's no point in working hard on a feature – or your employer working hard – if you aren't trying to make the best out of it.

When you're finished, state the price of the product.

Put the price in terms ordinary people can understand. If you can break the cost up into units (a week's worth of fancy coffee, a couple of pizzas), it makes the cost less objectionable.

CALL TO ACTION: THE CLIMAX

Once this sales letter is over, they're going to be all alone again, facing whatever problem they've got. They can either do this by themselves, with techniques that haven't worked for them in the past, or they can do it with you and their product at their side.

I've seen lots of seemingly great pitches get neglected simply because they didn't tell the customer what to do during the sales pitch! I know it seems a little crazy. "I'm advertising a product," you might say, "shouldn't it be obvious that I want them to buy it?"

Not necessarily. A really good sales pitch can leave a customer in a near- hypnotic state. The information on sales letters you've just read is some powerful stuff: it might seem formulaic once I've pointed it out and you start to see it everywhere, but these techniques are common for a reason.



In the same way that a hypnotist tells you to wake up and feel refreshed when he

snaps his fingers, you need to channel all the emotion you've put into your letter into a goal – buying your product.

Don't be subtle or clever with this. If we've done everything properly, the customer is going to be in an extremely obedient state.

Remind them AGAIN of all the great things you're giving them as a summary, and tell them exactly what you want them to do, whether it's clicking on a link, filling out a form, or making a phone call.

So vividly remind them of the consequences of not buying the product. There are a variety of things to include in your "climax". While it doesn't have to be longer than a paragraph or two, you will be fitting a large amount of information into that little area. The following concepts should be included in your close to encourage the purchase.

THE OPPORTUNITY

One thing to include is repeating what the offer is, including where they can request more information if they aren't yet sure. Be descriptive about what they will get after they purchase or sign-up for something. You should evoke confidence in every aspect of the close, including the offer segment.

THE PROMISE

You should also remind the reader what the promise is. You are showing how this particular product or service will solve their problems and are promising them results. Show confidence and explain again what it is that they are getting both physically and emotionally.

EXPLAIN YOUR UNIQUE VALUE

You have to make sure that the customer knows they can't get anything exactly like this... anywhere else. The product you are selling should be unique and demonstrate facts, reviews and explanations about why this is true. Provide

substance to your offer and promise by being detailed why you are unique and different. This can be through text, as well as images or video.

THE PRICE

The prospective customer will also need to know the price again. We're sandwiching it at a critical point - between reassurances of our authority and explaining the price. The close might even be the first time you mention the price of the product or service!

JUSTIFY THE PURCHASE

It also helps to rationalize why this is a good buying decision. It can be a separate section of the close or be included in the description of the promise and benefit of your product or service. Convince the reader that this is a great investment.

OUT OF OPTIONS, OUT OF TIME

Even when you've sold someone on the value of a product, they may have an instinct to come back and buy it later. They'll bookmark it, they'll let it sit for a while, and they'll get distracted by some other shiny thing.

Not OK. We need them to buy what we're selling right now.

In stories, the heroes have time deadlines (the detectives have 48 hours to solve a case) and action deadlines (the rebels need to blow up a deadly space station) in order to drive them into immediate action.

We can do the same thing in sales.

- Tell them it's a limited time offer. Before long, you'll either shutter the offer altogether because you don't want too much competition, or you'll raise the price.
- Tell them it's a sales limited offer. If you're selling personal tutoring,



you've only got room for 20 students, and if they miss out, they're out of luck!

- Combine the two – after the next 30 sales, the price is going to go up by a hundred dollars.

Now you're making them sweat. You've sold them on the value of the product, and now they're in a race with dozens, hundreds of invisible hands clicking that buy button!

It's critical to create a **realistic sense of urgency**, and playing on these two factors will help you do it.

It's important to keep your word. If you promise to only sell 100 copies of something, only sell 100 copies. If it's a limited time offer, limit the time you're going to sell it. That will add to your credibility next time.

You don't have to do this in isolation. You should sneak it in subliminally by pairing it up with the benefits of your product.

- You don't have to face rejection after painful rejection from women who don't take the time to understand you.
- I'll show you how to avoid a small piece of your body language that will guarantee that no dog will ever obey you. Ever.
- Without the secrets in this seminar, you'll be on the outside looking in when Google revolutionizes social networking.

Don't totally drown them in fear, but make it present.

PROVIDE A GUARANTEE

This has two benefits. First, it completely erases the perception that you're a fly by night scam artist. Why would somebody out to cheat you promise to give your money back if you weren't satisfied with the service?

Second, we're still weaving the dream of ourselves as trustworthy and helpful. We care about the customer even more than we care about our own profit. Our goal

is to help them, and we're so confident in our product being the answer we'll stake the check on it.

And now that the risk has been reversed, the customer almost doesn't feel like they're spending real money.

Now, while guarantees usually increase the rate of sale, that isn't EVERYTHING. There are times and situations where there shouldn't be a guarantee. If you're selling a product that is pretty subjective, or intended for therapeutic reasons (like a massage or something like that), you don't need to offer a guarantee.

You also don't need to offer a guarantee on a service that "works as delivered", like a piece of software. If it runs and does what it's intended to do, and you don't want to deal with refunds and support in a shady industry, nothing is forcing you to offer refunds.

POSTSCRIPT

In a movie, an epilogue might show the hero relaxing and enjoying his success. No such luck in a sales letter. Use your P.S. to sum up the main benefits and give one last reminder to act. 90% of people will read the P.S. – even if they've skimmed the entire letter.

If this is your first time, it can be really easy to doubt your own abilities. But the longer you work at sales advertising, the better you'll become, even if you're not an eloquent writer and don't have any money to spend.

Do diligent research and lean on your swipe file, especially if it's written in a related niche. Adapt the general structure to your work while stressing your own benefits.

All of the deep work has been done for you by the masters - all you've got to do is work hard and speak with passion.

LIFE AS A COPYWRITER

Becoming a copywriter allows you to have a lucrative career by setting your own hours and choosing when and where you work, however, the downside to this is having to motivate yourself on a daily basis and not having a supervisor to answer to. When you work as a freelance copywriter, it is up to you to remain productive and motivate yourself to complete your sales copy and other content you have been assigned.

One of the toughest parts of learning *anything* new is doing it the first time. It seems like no matter how many books you read, courses you take, or workshops you visit, you'll never be ready for all the little practical hurdles. That's one of the reasons it's so important to take decisive action in life. By expediting your inevitable failures and mistakes, you can reach success more quickly.

But in copywriting, failure means trouble for yourself *and your client*. That's why it's important to think about these practical issues and how to solve them.

QUALITY COLLATERAL

Your collateral isn't just limited to business cards. Things like contracts, proposals, and questionnaires might seem mundane, but they can save you lots of headaches down the road. When you present useful documentation that your client didn't "think" that you needed, you're establishing that you're a professional who is prepared for these issues- which is vital even if you're new to freelance copywriting.

Make your proposals and contracts pop visually – and make them unique to you if you have the time.

CLIENT REVISION

You haven't felt pain until you've had to wait three weeks for a "very busy" client to take three weeks to evaluate your copy and make a payment. You can feel

powerless, especially if you've fried your eyes late at night trying to boost their business, only to learn that they don't come close to reciprocating your effort.

Of course, sometimes there are clients that don't revise well. Either they demand you to make revisions that won't work, or they're indecisive, constantly tweaking their work (and their opinion of it) until you've sunk huge amounts of time and resources into it.

You have a lot less leverage dealing with a client once you've started working together, so be firm before you start working together. State a pre-arranged number of revisions before a surcharge kicks in, and make sure the client knows that approving the work and paying for it is a priority. You should also remember to add a little "loose" time for issues like this when calculating how much time you'll spend writing.

If all else fails, give the client a refund and move on. It can be painful to return money that you need, especially if the work is half completed.

But in the long term, you have to grow your business by creating new content and marketing, not endlessly revising to satisfy a single client.



KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR WORK

It's an exciting, fist-pumping thrill when you take on your first couple of clients. But eventually, they start to stack up.

Once you're juggling four or five projects at once, all in different stages of completion, all with different research to rifle through, and all with clients who want to know how things are coming on a daily basis, you'll understand why so many in-demand copywriters push work off to their students.

Poor organization can doom your business, no matter how good of a writer you are.

Keep track of the status of your clients using a color-coded spreadsheet. Keep track of the date you started, the target date of completion, a rough estimate of how much total time you've spent on the project, and what jobs are or might be coming up.

You should also keep track of payments, deposits, outstanding invoices, business related expenses, and other miscellany using dedicated financial software like Quicken or TurboTax. Remember that when you're self-employed, you're responsible for staying compliant with the law!

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Stuff happens. Constantly.

Your power goes out. Your internet gets disconnected. Someone hacks your website or email. You need a new laptop, desktop, power cable, or printer. During these times, it's important not to get frustrated – and preparation is your best defense against frustration.

Make a list of all the most important tools you need to run your business and ask yourself what you would do if you didn't have them. If something is irreplaceable to your business, make sure that you have a copy or backup somewhere in your house or on the internet.

It's impossible to plan for everything, but it's impossible *not* to mitigate your risks when you think ahead.

Finally, give a little thought to the programs you use in your regular work as a copywriter. Make sure every application you use has a backup or autosave function enabled.

MAKING THE MOST OF DESK TIME

What makes a website effective?

One metric is dividing the number of sales by the number of targeted visitors. The conversion rate of the website shows how well it does with the number of opportunities it's given. If a good copywriter doubles the conversion rate of a website, she doubles its profitability without any increases to the advertising budget.

Since you have a fixed number of hours in a day, your efficiency as a copywriter is vital to your success. If it takes you too long to do vital tasks like writing copy, making new website entries, or making phone calls, you'll work longer and make less money.

You don't want that.

Let's discuss a few tools and tactics that will make the time fly.

THE RIGHT STUFF

In order to properly manage your copywriting career, you need to find ways to maintain your productivity. Some writers are able to do this with no problems, while others need a gentle push. There are a variety of tools at your disposal to help with productivity.

Standing or Treadmill Desk – The first available tool might seem unconventional, and boy is it funny looking... but it's highly effective. A standing desk is a high desk that holds your computer, and you stand behind it and walk. This keeps you in a slightly uncomfortable position which encourages you to work harder and write faster. Standing and doing your work keeps you from being distracted with browsing the Internet or watching TV. This also helps promote a healthy care since you aren't sitting up all the time. If you are looking to combine cardio with work, you can also get a treadmill desk.

Work-Only Computer - If you have the funds to do so, try purchasing a second computer that is only used for writing. This should be a computer without internet access, browsers, games or anything else that might distract you. It will impart in your mind that when you are on this computer, it is only to get work done and nothing else. When you are ready to submit content and need internet access, save the documents to a thumb drive and transfer them to your primary computer.

If you don't have the budget for this, or you're too easily tempted, just set up a second profile on your computer.

MIND MAPPING SOFTWARE

If you track yourself with a time management program like Toggl, you may find that most of your time writing isn't spent writing at all – it's spent brainstorming. Thinking of elegant ways to transition from topic to topic or wrestling with writers block and figuring what to say next isn't time effective.

That's why an outline is a requirement of fast, efficient writing. Using a mind mapping program like Mindjet's MindManager will exponentially increase your writing speed – much more than a typing course.

Mind mapping can be counter intuitive at first, and you may have the urge to "start writing" as quickly as possible. But give it a chance.

DICTATION SOFTWARE

Dragon's NaturallySpeaking is still the top dog when it comes to dictation software. If you tried it in years past and found it clumsy and inaccurate, give the newer versions a chance. This software will help you write at the speed of thought – another huge improvement, especially once you get accustomed to saying your words instead of pecking them into the keyboard.

As a copywriter, this has the added benefit of encouraging you to write the way you speak. You won't always need this, but it has really obvious uses for anyone who makes a living making content.

EYE DEFENDER

A popular software application for copywriters and freelance workers, in general, is Eye Defender. Eye Defender has a default timer set for 45 minutes. After 45 minutes of working, your screensaver will pop up, which gives you a two minute break. After the two minutes are over, you will return to your work. This not only lets you keep your motivation for 45-minute intervals, but it helps to avoid eye strain by letting your eyes rest at least once an hour. If you prefer to take breaks more often, you can set the timer for less time than 45 minutes; however, you shouldn't go more than an hour without a break.

YOUR BEST TOOL: YOUR NOGGIN

Have you got internet ADD? You probably aren't the only one but it's not an excuse to ignore the tasks that need doing. If you are having difficulty motivating yourself or keeping your concentration, these tips will be invaluable to you.

Eliminate Distractions – If you are easily distracted, the only way to keep up your productivity is to eliminate them. This might mean working in a different room of your home or even completing work at the local library or coffee shop. Keep the radio and television off if they are keeping you from your writing, as well.

Stay off of the Internet – One of the biggest distractions when you are a copywriter is browsing the internet and checking social media sites. If you find this is an issue for you, disconnect the internet or work from a different computer. Use LeechBlock or some other tool to shut down time-sucking sites. It also helps to simply close all of your internet browsers so that you are not tempted to click over every few minutes.

Schedules and To-do Lists – Finally, schedule your work throughout the day so that you find the time for work and everyday tasks you need to complete.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The material we've covered in this course isn't easy. But it is simple.

Stick with one thing at a time, and make your writing career the thrust of your online efforts.

Be a ravenous reader. Not just of sales material, but of every kind of literature that engages an audience. Don't just swallow what works – ask yourself why it makes an impact and incorporate those deeper ideas into your work.

Remember that your skills aren't just valuable in the online world. The competition is fierce in the online marketplace, and there are plenty of smart people out there desperate to get your skills and willing to pay for it. You'd be surprised at how many books and courses on offline marketing can be applied to our business with a few adjustments.

And this is important... don't, under any circumstances, spend all your free time in front of the computer.

There's nothing wrong with busting your rear when you're getting started. Determination is critical to getting off the ground. But temper that dedication with a determination - to live a life that's interesting and filled with imagination.

Your experiences make you irreplaceable. And it makes sure that everything you write down is impossible to replicate. So don't be one of the wimps that hides behind formulas and methods – learn the rules, but trust your instincts, use that juice that makes you great, and have the courage to go out on a limb.

And if you're ready to live and write with that kind of course, I can promise you, you've got what it takes to become a champion!